£7m to help conserve and protect three precious Yorkshire landscapes

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This investment, which includes £374,600 in development funding so that planning for the schemes can get underway, will ensure a boost for rural areas and provide long-term social, economic and environmental benefits. The landscapes, which cover some 561 km² (more than 78,000 football pitches) between them include:

- Humberhead Levels - spanning Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, a rare internationally important wetland landscape characterised by significant remains of medieval strip farming and famous for its peatlands
- Ingleborough Dales - a limestone landscape in the Craven district of the Yorkshire Dales National Park
- North York Moors - home of the pioneering ironstone industry and the early development of railways

HLF's Landscape Partnership (LP) programme** - which has now been running for a decade - is the most significant grant scheme available for landscape-scale projects. To date, over £160m has been invested in 91 different areas across the UK helping forge new partnerships between public and community bodies and ensuring people are better equipped to understand and tackle the needs of their local landscapes.

Professor Sir John Lawton CBE FRS, eminent British ecologist and author of *Making Space for Nature: A Review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network*, said: "As a passionate advocate of landscape-scale conservation through habitat recreation and restoration, I am delighted to see HLF's continuing, visionary support for nine more Landscape Partnerships throughout the UK, for the benefits of people, landscapes and wildlife. And as an adopted Yorkshireman, I cannot help noticing, with considerable pride, that three of them are in the iconic landscapes of God's own county!"

Fiona Spiers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund for Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "This funding has helped forge strong local partnerships which have secured the future of some of our most threatened landscapes. These schemes all demonstrate a need for urgent conservation work to the natural and built heritage as well as reconnecting rural communities to these places. They are important on many levels, including being an integral part of our health and well-being and a significant contributor to the tourist economy. Yorkshire's amazing countryside is under ever-increasing pressure and we must act now to make sure it continues to be one of our greatest assets."

These successful Landscape Partnership projects in Yorkshire are three of nine around the UK (totalling over £21million investment) to receive initial funding support from HLF today:

Humberhead Levels LP, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire – awarded HLF grant of £1.9m, including £77,500 development funding
The Levels include parts of North Lincolnshire, East and South Yorkshire. Set within a low-lying engineered and drained landscape (often referred to as 'English polders'), the partnership area, covering 233 km², includes both the UK's largest lowlands raised peat bog complex and its most extensive landscape survival. Rare birds, including breeding cranes and nightjars, thrive on the moors but the bogs are at risk of drying out and the medieval landscape is being lost. Running alongside conservation work will be opportunities for local people to take part in archaeological surveying, traditional ploughing, land stewardship skills and training. The project is led by North Lincolnshire Council.

Ingleborough Dales LP, awarded HLF grant of £2.1m, including £99,000 development funding
Covering 128 km² of distinct limestone landscape the Craven district of the Yorkshire Dales, known as the 'land of the crags', features Great Scar limestone shaped by run off from the Three Peaks into the Ribblesdale Valley and provides some of the best examples of limestone scenery in the UK. With the Settle to Carlisle Railway slicing through the landscape atop the Ribblehead Viaduct, the partnership area supports species rich grassland and the remains of raised peat bog, and is rich in limestone caves (many with SSSI status and of European significance), rivers, waterfalls, limestone pavement, and evidence of quarrying past and present. Alongside restoration and conservation works, the project also features traineeships for people seeking careers in traditional building skills, and opportunities for volunteers surveying and recording natural and domestic elements of the landscape. The project is led by Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust.

North York Moors LP, awarded HLF grant of £3m, including £198,000 development funding
Entitled 'This Exploited Land – the trailblazing story of ironstone and railways in the North York Moors', this project covers an area 200km² and will explore the impact of sudden industrialisation on the landscape of these remote valleys while conserving, protecting and recording the fragile remains of the revolutionary age. The project aims to restore key industrial heritage features of the area including the 19th century ironworks at Grosmont, which will be conserved and restored, in addition to others including Beck Hole, Esk Valley, Warren Moor and Rosedale mines. To be linked together with a new waymarked route called 'The Ironstone Way' the project will also restore Ancient Woodland Sites, improve management of Fen Bog, and include learning activities for local North East communities of all ages as well as an apprenticeship programme in local traditional building skills. The project is led by the North York Moors National Park Authority.

Notes to editors

*A Landscape Partnership (LP) earmarked grant means that money has been set aside by HLF for the scheme in question. The applicant then progresses to the second round and submits a further, fully-developed application to secure the full award.
**HLF's Landscape Partnerships are helping bring together members of the community as well as local, regional, and national organisations to deliver schemes which benefit some of the UK's most outstanding landscapes and rural communities. Grants range from £100,000 to £3m. The next closing date for LP applications is May 2014 for decisions in October 2014.

Further information

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